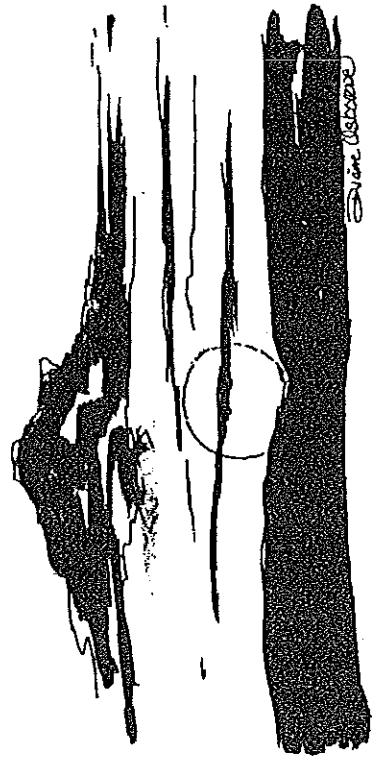


## An Evening Fantasy

Black silhouettes they stand,  
 A purple black against the summer sky,  
 Like sleeping giants whose huge mass  
 Has quenched the brilliance of the setting sun.  
 Mountains, Mountains  
 That in their blackness form  
 Weird shapes that show another world.  
 The blue infinity above their crest  
 Has decked herself in raiment  
 Of rich tinted clouds,  
 A proper gown in which to bid goodby  
 To the departing day.  
 Night comes, and with its blackness  
 Blots out all perspective  
 And pastes the somber giant forms  
 Against the summer sky.

John Blaker Herod



## Ramps

Trimming back a band of brittle hydrangeas  
 I am assaulted by a surge of airborne garlic set free  
 as I cut into deep green jagged fronds that invaded  
 spaces left when the hydrangeas died back to stalks.  
*That's ramps, Mary had said ten years earlier.*  
*Not garlic, ramps. Back home when the ramps come in*  
*you can smell the mountain kids at school fifty feet away.*  
*Ramps gets in your pores—stays with you for weeks.*

*Polly and Mike gave 'em to me, I told her.*  
*They said they found garlic gone wild at a farmhouse*  
*someone bulldozed for the Walmart.*  
*Must've been a garden back then.*

Rubbing a torn leaf, I inhale, recall another cold morning  
 fifteen years past when I tucked a dozen smelly fat bulbs  
 into a corner of my postage-stamp plot and forgot them.

Once, though, they grew fat in another man's plot  
 and in early spring got into his pores and the pores of his children  
 who ate them with fat pork, maybe, and pungent collards.

West Virginians knew ramps, they still do  
 Georgians don't  
 Cherokees and Creeks, gone, knew ramps  
 the book says so  
 Georgians don't

I toss the wounded leaf aside and grab pruning shears  
 wondering about a Georgian who grew ramps anyway  
 grew collards and raised pigs, lived and died or moved away  
 in the time before the Walmart came to our town.

James M. Brewbaker